

Amendments to the Specification:

Amendments to the specification are presented below with replacement paragraphs marked up to show changes made relative to the immediate prior version.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 23 with the following amended paragraph:

In preferred embodiments of the invention, it is furthermore possible to have recourse to one and/or another of the following arrangements:

- the second element comprises a nipple extending, starting from the shield, in a first direction comprising a downwardly directed oblique component, with reference to the top and bottom of the face;

- the mask comprises a substantially conical cavity narrowing toward the first element in order to guide the second element toward the first element, in the movement of bringing the shield toward the mask;

- the nipple is adapted to move longitudinally, substantially in the first direction, between a locked position and an unlocked position, within a grasping unit comprising grasping surfaces for a user's fingers;

- ~~- the nipple is adapted to move longitudinally, substantially in the first direction, between a locked position and an unlocked position, within a grasping unit comprising grasping surfaces for a user's fingers;~~

- it is provided with a push-button placed substantially between the grasping surfaces and manually operable in order to move the nipple from its locked position to its unlocked position;

- the push-button has, in a direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction, an ergonomic surface for pressing the push-button, this surface having a dimension greater than 15 mm; conversely, the height of the push-button in the first direction is adapted to limit the overall dimensions of the protective equipment according to the invention and to facilitate its insertion in a storage box;

- the mask has guidance surfaces, diverging from a ridge situated substantially in coincidence with the bridge of the user's nose, and the nipple is flanked by two ~~wings~~ side parts that are substantially symmetrical with respect to the median plane of symmetry of the face when the equipment is being worn by the user, these ~~wings~~ side parts extending between a high end close to the nipple and a low end distant from the nipple and becoming more distant from this plane toward their low end, in order to allow the guidance, by the guidance surfaces, of the positioning of the shield on the mask;

- it comprises a locking indicator adapted to block, in an active position, any movement of the first element with respect to the second element and which can be in the active position only when the mask and the shield are secured to each other by a mutual interlocking of complementary shapes of the first and second lock elements;

- the first and second lock elements are adapted to allow a movement of the shield with respect to the mask, and to favor the application of the shield over the user's face; by means of this arrangement, the equipment according to the invention adapts more easily to the different facial morphologies of users by allowing the shield to rock from front to rear in order to bring it closer to the user's forehead and to apply the shield around his eyes;

- the first and second lock elements are mobile with respect to each other, about a horizontal axis, by means of two links;

- the mask comprises a locking ramp adapted to guide the shield toward a locked position of the shield on the mask, while the shield is moving toward the mask;

- the locking ramp is oriented with a component that is downward and toward the interior of the mask, in order to position the shield on the mask by a simple and natural movement;

- it comprises spring means adapted to bring the shield toward the user's face, when the shield is secured to the mask and when the mask is worn by the user;

- it comprises a harness fitted with straps adapted to maintain the mask in the position of use on the user's head and in which the shield comprises two guidance members adapted for each one respectively to become inserted under a strap of the harness when putting the shield into position on the mask; the shield can thus be applied over the user's face, by means

of the straps, but with no manipulation by the user other than that of bringing the shield toward and locking it onto the mask; this arrangement makes it possible to have better sealing between the shield and the face without, however, requiring additional time for putting the shield into position;

- the guidance members are adapted to cause the straps, under which they are inserted while the shield is being put into position on the mask, to rise over the sides of the shield; the straps thus apply the shield even more efficiently against the user's face; and

- the straps of the harness are provided with a ~~collar~~ sleeve, at the level of the places of insertion of the guidance members under these straps, in order to facilitate the shield being put into position and the insertion of the guidance members under the straps.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 23 with the following amended paragraph:

According to another aspect, the invention relates to a breathing mask for protective equipment such as mentioned above; the ~~latter mask~~ can comprise, in particular, a guidance ramp and/or straps provided with guidance ~~collars~~ sleeves at the level of the places of insertion of the members under these straps.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 9 with the following amended paragraph:

According to yet another aspect, the invention relates to a protective shield for protective equipment such as mentioned above; the ~~latter shield~~ can comprise guidance members adapted for each one respectively to be inserted under a strap of a harness when putting the shield into position on the mask.

On page 5, line 31, please insert the following heading:

-- Brief Description of the Drawings --

On page 7, line 10, please insert the following heading:

-- Detailed Description of the Drawings --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 34 with the following amended paragraph:

The shell 14 comprises a ridge surface 20 located substantially in coincidence with that of the user's nose when the user is wearing the mask 2. The shell 14 also comprises two guidance surfaces 22 which extend, starting from the ridge surface 20, downward while diverging with respect to a median plane P ~~corresponds~~ corresponding to the plane of symmetry of the user's head.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

This V-shape comprises two ~~wings~~ side parts 52 that are substantially symmetrical with respect to the median plane P of symmetry of the face, when the equipment 1 is being worn by the user. These ~~wings~~ side parts 52 meet at the level of a central zone 54 from which extends a nipple 56. The nipple 56 constitutes the second lock element which cooperates with the ramp 32 in order to secure the shield 6 to the mask 2.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 12 with the following amended paragraph:

The ~~wings~~ side parts 52 extend between a high end 58 close to the nipple 56 and a low end 60 distant from the nipple 56. These ~~wings~~ side parts 52 become more distant from the plane P of symmetry of the face toward their low end 60. These ~~wings~~ side parts 52 allow guidance, by the guidance surfaces 22 of the mask 2, facilitating the positioning of the shield 6 on the mask 2.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 17 with the following amended paragraph:

In order to put the shield 6 in position on the mask 2, the user grasps the shield 6 by means of the fixing-grasping unit 50 and then, in the described embodiment, presses the push button 84, using one or two fingers, while he is grasping the grasping surfaces 82 between the thumb and one or more other fingers. By pressing on the push button 84, the user makes the nipple 56 emerge from the fixing grasping unit 50. More precisely, the inner rod 62 is moved longitudinally and parallel with the direction Z- until the boss 66 is clear of the outer rod 64. Thus, when the shield 6 is brought toward the mask 2, the ~~wings~~ side parts 52 are guided by the guidance surfaces 22. Then, when the shield 6 is close to the mask 2, the more precise positioning of the shield 6 on the mask 2 is guided by the entrance of the nipple 56 into the cavity 24. As the boss 66 is clear of the outer rod 64, the tongues 69 of this outer rod 64 can be deformed radially toward the inner rod 62 until the boss 68 of the outer rod 64 is at the level of the flared opening 30. The tongues 69 of the outer rod 64 can then separate radially outwards.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 15 with the following amended paragraph:

The mouth-and-nose face cover 208 is adapted to be applied over the bottom of a user's face. As shown in ~~figure 8~~ figures 7 and 8, the mouth-and-nose face cover 208 comprises a cavity intended to cover the nose and the mouth of that user. This cavity is lined with a flexible membrane also extending all around the latter in order to form a seal 218 intended to be applied in contact with the user's face.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 24 with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in figures 8 and 10, the first branch 223 comprises two slides 228, disposed on either side of the plane P, symmetrically with respect to the latter, and extending in the direction Z-. Each slide 228 has a locking blade 229 mounted over it.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

In the embodiment shown in figure 11, the ~~locking nose~~ attachment nose 250 comprises a grasping device 252, a carriage 254 and a protective casing 256.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 29 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring again to figure 7, the frame 238 comprises guidance members 239 intended to be inserted, without additional manipulation by the user, under the straps 205 of the harness, when the user positions the shield on the mask 202. More precisely, the straps are provided with ~~collars~~ sleeves 207, at the level of the places of insertion of the guidance

members 239. These ~~collars~~ sleeves 207 facilitate the insertion of the guidance members 239 under the straps 205. Furthermore, the guidance members 239 are shaped in such a way as to cause the straps 205 to rise over the sides of the frame 238 in order to apply the seal 240 more effectively onto the user's face.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 17 with the following amended paragraph:

When the user, already wearing the mask 202 on his face, wishes to put on the shield 206, he takes hold of the shield 206 by means of the grasping device 252 and brings it toward the mask 202. Close to the mask 202, the positioning of the shield 206 is facilitated by the locking ramp 224. When the shield 206 is substantially correctly positioned on the mask 202, the user continues to press the grasping device 252 toward the mask 202. As shown in figure ~~12~~ 13, the grasping device 252 is provided with two flexible blades 253 which, on passing the hard point constituted by the protuberances 233, tap on the shell 214 and thus produce an audible indication that the shield 206 is locked on the mask 202. By thus pressing the grasping device 252 toward the mask 202, the user has driven the carriage 254, which is mobile with respect to the grasping device 252 and which in this case comes to a stop against the latter. Thus, the locking blades 229 are deformed in order to penetrate into the carriage 254 and then are straightened elastically toward a position of rest in which their straight edges 231 cooperate with the carriage 254 in order to retain the locking nose 250 on the mask 202.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 21 with the following amended paragraph:

When the user takes off the shield, the guidance members 239 pass under the ~~collars~~ sleeves 207 in order to release the shield from the straps 205.